Therefore, the Examiner is requested to consider any aspect of these claims that were not previously considered.

Applicants propose amending Figure 1 to include reference numerals. No new matter is presented. The specification has been amended at page 10 to refer to the reference numerals added to Figure 1. No new matter has been added to the specification. Approval of the proposed drawing changes is respectfully requested.

The claims have been amended to address various typographical errors. None of the amendments to the claims are considered to constitute a narrowing amendment for purposes of patentability. None of the amendments to the claims presents new matter. The amendments to the claims are fully supported by the specification. To illustrate, support for amendments to the claims is present such as at page 2, line 34 to page 3, line 2 which discloses: "wherein for each step in the procedure the method generates electronic evaluation forms"; and , at page 6, lines 2—13 which discloses "hierarchically organized as forms and subforms", and "wherein said generation of forms is carried out in such a way to enable the transfer of a group of evaluation forms and subforms in one operation into one file".

In the Office action, the drawing was objected to as lacking reference numerals. Applicant respectfully submits that since the drawing shows a schematic of information flows, that reference numerals are not required. One of ordinary skill would readily understand the drawing without reference numerals. However, and merely for the purpose of expediting prosecution and to avoid any issue of abandonment, applicants have amended the drawing to include reference numerals. The specification has been amended to refer to the revisions to FIG. 1. Nothing in the amendments to FIG. 1 or to the specification constitute narrowing amendments for the purposes of patentability.

Claims 4, 6-9, 11,14,15,and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph as indefinite. Applicants respectfully submit that none of claims 4, 6-9, 11,14,15,and 17 are indefinite. The claims should have been amended per the Preliminary Amendment filed concurrently with the application. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by McIlroy et al. The Examiner has taken the position that McIlroy et al. shows each and every feature of claims 1-17.

Applicants traverse the rejection and request reconsideration in view of following discussion.

Applicants submit that a review of McIlroy et al. as a whole shows that the reference fails to teach each and every feature of both the claimed method and claimed computer system. McIlroy et al. therefore fails to anticipate any of the presently pending claims.

McIlroy et al. requires four general components to the application software employed therein, namely:

(1)   an index component that facilitates quick access to the correct guideline;

(2)   a question component that presents the questions and controls the navigation through the guideline based on the user's responses;

(3)   a treatment component, and

(4)   a clinical decision component.

McIlroy et al., as disclosed at col. 2, lines 59-65, builds from a data base of diagnosis based guidelines to achieve a diagnosis-based system. McIlroy et al. can be used during the various steps of the clinical decision process, e.g.:

(1)   prospectively, before treatment, when an individual presents a health concern,

(2)   concurrently, at any stage of existing treatment and

(3)   retrospectively, after treatment has been provided

McIlroy et al. fails to teach or suggest each and every feature of the present claims. In this regard, McIlroy et al. fails to teach or suggest all of the claimed features, e.g.:

1.   the actions of the catalogue comprise sequential procedure steps;

2.   for each step, evaluation forms are generated which are hierarchically organized as forms and subforms, and

3.   transfer of a group of the evaluation forms and subforms in one operation into one file.

Indeed, McIlroy et al. is silent as to each of these features. McIlroy et al. teach use of a decision tree (guideline) wherein the endpoints of the decision tree generates a set of treatment options. Data for use in the decision tree is responses to questions presented in the decision tree. The index component referred to by McIlroy et al. is not equivalent to the claimed catalogue of procedural steps. Indeed, McIlroy et al. is silent as to procedural steps when referring to the index component. Nothing in McIlroy et al. therefore teaches or suggests either the claimed system or method which employs the claimed catalogue that employs the claimed procedural steps

Similarly, McIlroy et al. fail to teaches or suggests the claimed evaluation forms which are hierarchically organized as forms and subforms. Indeed, McIlroy et al. is silent as to hierarchically organized forms and subforms, as well as to evaluation forms.

McIlroy et al. also fails to teach or suggest the transfer of a group of evaluation forms and subforms in a single operation into one file. McIlroy et al. is silent as to transfer of groups of forms and subforms in a single operation.

In addition to the forgoing, it should be noted that McIlroy et al. is based on the concept of diagnostic process, diagnostic confirmation, therapeutic selection, resource selection, acute care management and follow-up. McIlroy et al. does not produce an electronic patient record.

The claimed method, in contrast to McIlroy et al. , is not limited by use of diagnostic process or diagnostic confirmation. The claimed method advantageously can employ "templates" for a visit and a decision component to select the next template for use in the next visit.

The claimed method employs contacts (equivalent to visits in the medical context). The claimed method generates a template for the visit. The decision component of the claimed method searches a catalog for the generated template for use in the next visit to produce a

document for the electronic patient record. This document may include questions and requests for investigations and treatment.

In contrast to the claimed method, McIlroy et al. requires information on a patients health condition to generate guideline treatment options. As disclosed in the Abstract of McIlroy et al. , a user inputs actual or proposed and final treatments for a given individual. McIlroy et al. therefore requires use of health related questions in combination with a decision component.

In contrast to the diagnosis method required by McIlroy et al., the claimed method is visit based and is used concurrently with the visit. Contacts (visits) rather than questions are represented in a logically-structured order.
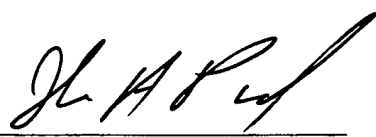
The claimed method can be performed without the additional question and treatment components required by McIlroy et al. The decision component of the claimed method navigates from a prior visit to the next visit. The visit (or contact) documents are built with subforms which may contain optional questions and recommendations.


Applicants submit that a review of the prior art of record as a whole shows that the claims in the present application meet the requirements for patentability. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner reconsider his rejections of the claims and allow claims 1-3, 5-14, 16, and 17.

                                        Respectfully submitted,

                                        VAN ROMUNDE ET AL

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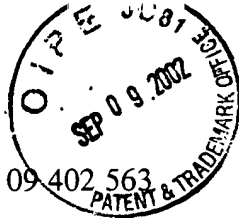
Marked Up Version Showing Additions and Deletions

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

On page 10, please replace paragraph 1 with the following paragraph:

According to a specific embodiment of the method of this invention, these original concepts may be implemented by incorporating the following features in the process forms and evaluation forms, as better understood by reference to FIG. 1 and to the table below, wherein the reference numerals in the table correspond to the reference numerals shown in Fig. 1. Fig. 1 schematically represents the links between process forms (guideline-step forms) and evaluation forms via subforms, as well as the links with dialogue forms and with steering algorithms.

On page 10, lease replace the table at line 5 with the following table:

Process form (guideline-step form) (A)	Evaluation form
link to steering (selection) algorithm	steering algorithm subform (D)
link to evaluation-subform (B) and evaluation -subform (B) itself	evaluation-subform (B)
link to dialogue-form (E)	possibility to activate dialogue-form (E)
link to additional tests, subform additional tests and standard completion of additional tests	subform additional tests and completion of additional tests
(optional) link to related procedures (such as clinical trial subforms) and the corresponding guideline-step forms	(optional) related procedures subforms)
link to next guideline step in accordance with guideline (steered by algorithm) (D)	possibility to activate next procedure step in accordance with guideline (steered by algorithm) (D)

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (once amended).   Method for electronically storing, retrieving and/or modifying records [and for sequentially steering a process of interrelated actions in respect of said records,] using a computer system comprising a display unit, an input unit, a memory unit and a processing unit, and involving at least one recorded catalogue of recommended actions, and for sequentially steering a process of interrelated actions from said at least one recorded catalogue of recommended actions, [characterised in that the] wherein said at least one recorded [catalogues] catalogue of recommended actions comprises[/comprise] hierarchised sequences of alternative actions, wherein said actions comprise sequential procedure steps and [in that] wherein for each of said steps the method generates electronic evaluation forms hierarchically organized as forms and subforms, wherein said evaluation forms [comprising] comprise a list of recommended actions, information-input requests and/or decision-requests, and wherein said generation of evaluation forms is carried out in function of [the] said hierarchised sequences of alternative actions of [the] said catalogue of recommended actions, and in function of the past history of actions[,] so as to enable transfer of a group of evaluation forms and subforms in one operation into one file.

Claim 2 (once amended).   Method according to claim 1, [characterised in that the] wherein said at least one recorded [catalogues] catalogue of recommended actions comprises[/comprise] associated electronic selection algorithms in respect of the hierarchised sequences of alternative actions.

Claim 3(once amended).   Method according to claim 2, [characterised in that the] wherein said selection algorithms [in respect of the hierarchised sequences of alternative actions] are integrated in said generated electronic forms [generated by the method].

Claim 5 (once amended).   Method according to claim [4] 1, [characterised in that the] wherein said evaluation form comprises information from [the] records relevant for [any] a decision-request involved in said evaluation form.

Claim 6 (twice amended).   Method according to claim 1, [characterised in that] wherein a record of information [used/entered] entered and used is stored in [the] said memory unit.

Claim 7 (twice amended).   Method according to claim 1, [characterised in that] wherein a record of the information and actions [used/entered] entered and used is stored in the memory unit for the purpose of measurement of the effectivity and/or efficiency of effects and/or results of the procedure.

Claim 8 (twice amended).   Method according to claim 1, [characterised in that] wherein the method involves a supervising organization for the purpose of quality [controll] control and quality improvement of the method.

Claim 9 (twice amended).   Method according to claim 1, [characterised in that] wherein the method allows for [the] updating of the recorded catalogue(s) of recommended actions.

Claim 10 (twice amended).   Method according to claim 7, [characterised in that] wherein said supervising organisation evaluates the effectivity and/or efficiency of effects and/or results based on said records of information and actions used/entered, stored during use of the method, and up-dates the recorded catalogue(s) of recommended actions in function of said evaluation.

Claim 11 (twice amended).   Method according to claim 1, [characterised in that] wherein the steering software is an application embodiment of commercial LOTUS NOTES and/or LOTUS DOMINO NOTES software.

Claim 12 (once amended).   Computer system for electronically storing, retrieving and/or modifying records and for sequentially steering interrelated actions in respect of said records, comprising a display unit, an input unit, a memory unit and a processing unit, [characterised in that] wherein said memory unit of the computer system comprises at least one recorded catalogue of recommended actions involving hierarchised sequences of alternative actions, and [that] wherein said processing unit of the computer system is programmed to generate electronic evaluation forms, hierarchically organized as forms and subforms, comprising a list of recommended actions, information-input requests and/or decision-requests, in function of [the]

-3-

said hierarchised sequences of alternative actions of [the] said catalogue of recommended actions, and in function of the past history of actions, so as to enable transfer of a group of evaluation forms and subforms in one operation into one file.

Claim 13 (once amended). Computer system according to claim 12, [characterised in that the] wherein said at least one recorded [catalogues] catalogue of recommended actions in the memory unit of the computer system comprises[/comprise] associated electronic selection algorithms in respect of the hierarchised sequences of alternative actions.

Claim 14 (twice amended). Computer system according to claim 13, [characterised in that] wherein the processing unit of the computer system is programmed to integrate [the] said selection algorithms [in respect of the hierarchised sequences of alternative actions] into said generated electronic forms.

Claim 16 (once amended). Computer system according to claim [15] 12, [characterised in that] wherein the processing unit of the computer system is programmed to integrate into the evaluation form [any] information from the records which is relevant for [any] a decision-request involved in said evaluation form.

Claim 17 (twice amended). Computer system according to claim 12, [characterised in that] wherein the processing unit of the computer system is programmed to store a record of the information entered and actions used[/entered during the process] into the memory unit of the computer system.
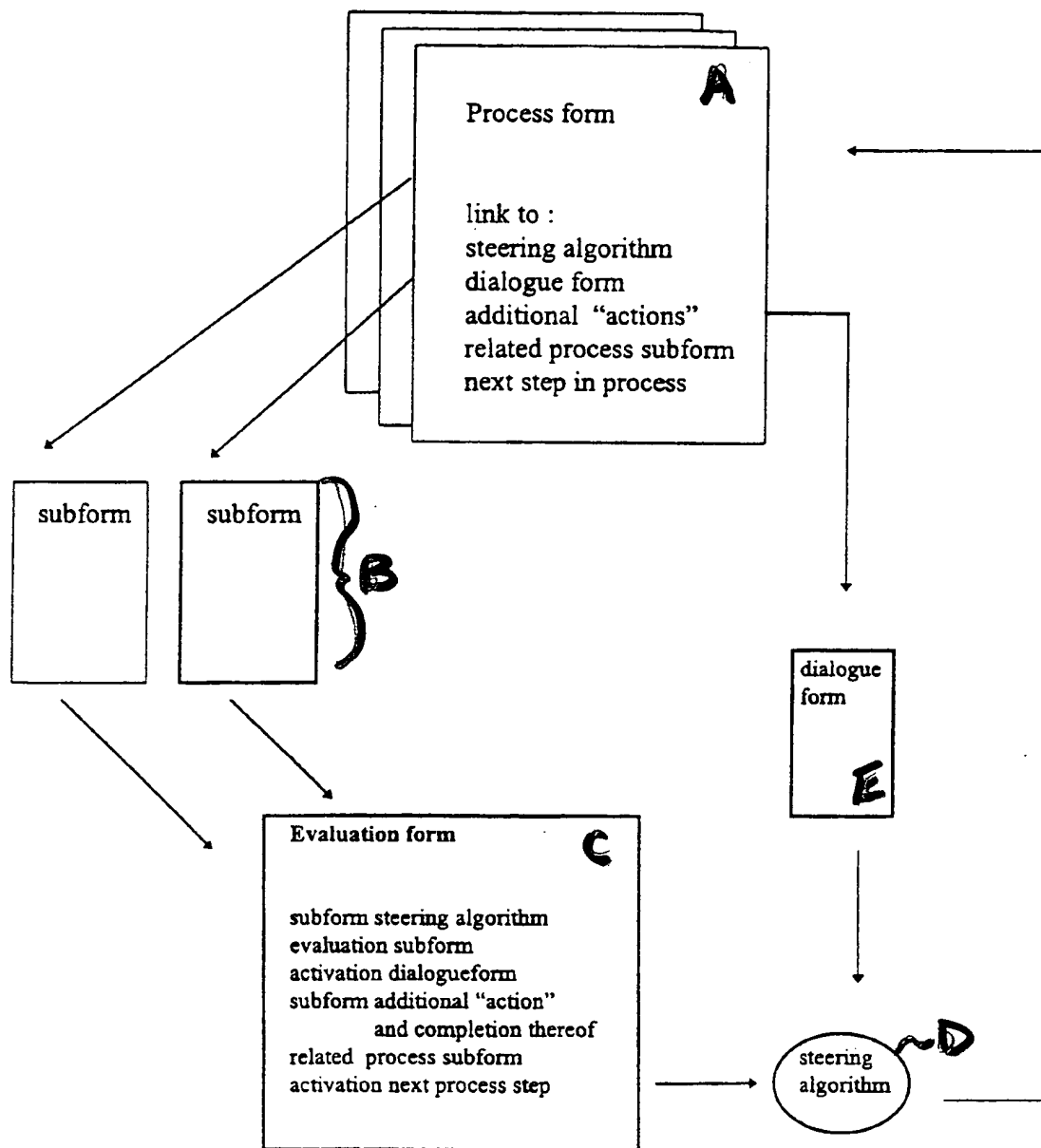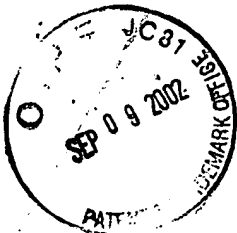
FIGURE 1